LETTER

TO

Robert Moſs, Thomas Gooch,

And the Reſt of the

MINISTERS,

Who, in a late PETITION to the

HOUSE of LORDS,

Stiled Themſelves

The Clergy in and about LONDON.

To which is added, the Copy of a Paper, intitl'd,

I. The Petition of the *London* Clergy to the *Houſe of Lords*, againſt the Quakers Bill.

II. The Lords PROTEST on rejecting the ſaid Petition.

III. The Lords PROTEST againſt the Quakers Bill.

By *JOSHUA FREEMAN.*

Becauſe of Swearing the Land mourneth. Jer. xxiii. 10.

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A LETTER *to* Robert Moſs, Thomas Gooch, *and the reſt of the Miniſters, who, in a late Petition to the Lords, ſtil'd themſelves the* Clergy in and about *London.*

YOUR Petition to the Houſe of Lords againſt the Quakers Bill having been lately rejected; and ſince That, it having appeared in Print, with Reaſons why it ought to have been *rejected*; and likewiſe with Reaſons why the Bill (which was deſign'd to grant our Friends ſome Eaſe in relation to our *Solemn Affirmation*) ſhould not paſs; I think it but Juſtice to vindicate our ſelves, and the Noble Lords who were ſo good as to remove the Difficulties which many of us lay under; and publickly to acknowledge the publick Favours confer'd upon us.

The *Petition* begins with a Suggeſtion, that if our Friends were reliev'd from the Solemn Affirmation, *the Legal Maintenance of the Clergy by* TYTHES *would be in a more eſpecial Manner endangered.*

It will be impoſſible, I conceive, for you, or any one elſe, to make out this; ſince this Bill leaves us juſt where it found us in That reſpect. Some of us do deny the Right of *Tithes*; and All of us do apprehend that the *Jus Divinum* of them is impoſſible to be prov'd. But ſtill we are under the ſame Law, and liable to the ſame Proſecutions, which we were liable to before; and the Miniſters will find the very ſame Redreſs of any Grievance which They have had all along.

As this was very obvious, the Petitioners, for want of other Proof, *inſinuate* to the Lords their Apprehenſions, that the Quakers MAY *be under ſtrong Inducements to eaſe their Conſcience in That reſpect, by violating it in another.* The Meaning of which Suggeſtion is, that we may be tempted to tell a *Lye*, tho we can't be tempted to *Swear*, in order to ſave our ſelves from Payment of Tithes. 'Tis ſomewhat unaccountable with us, that Men, who are allowed to be very ſcrupulous in a Matter at beſt of a *Ritual Nature*, ſhould be judged ſo

wicked

wicked and abſurd as to be ready to violate their Conſciences in a Matter of an *eternal and immutable Nature.* 'Tis evident that there is no expreſs *Goſpel Command* for the Payment of Tithes; and it ſeems to Us an impoſing of the Law of *Moſes* upon Chriſtians, to force us to ſuch Payment. But ſtill we know the Difference betwixt Sacrifice and Mercy; and have ſo learnt Chriſt as not to prefer, or to equal a Ritual with an Eternal Truth. Since then the *utmoſt* that the Miniſters have infer'd, is, that we *may be under ſtrong Inducements*, we muſt think it a *groundleſs*, an *Unchriſtian*, and a very *injurious* Repreſentation of our Caſe to the Lords; and we muſt think it as groundleſs an Apprehenſion and mere *Panick* in theſe Men to fear that we ſhou'd make ſuch Uſe of our Indulgence. For what if our *ſimple Affirmation ſhall paſs in all Courts of Juſtice for Legal Evidence?* If our ſimple Affirmation be to all Intents as Obligatory as another Man's Oath, and we incur the ſame Inconveniences for the Breach of *That*, as other Men do for Perjury, I am not able to ſee any Difference that our Affirmation will make in Point of *Legal Evidence.* Why does the Legiſlature demand an Oath of Men, unleſs it be to come at the

the Truth in all such Matters as belong to Civil Cognizance? Now if to sincere Followers of Jesus Christ, * *Yea* is *Yea*, and *Nay* is *Nay*; and *whatsoever is more than these cometh of Evil*, or rather *of the Evil One*, our simple Affirmation is as obligatory upon us, as the Oath of other Men is upon them; and consequently ought to be deem'd as valid in any Court of Justice as any Words which other Men can use.

But because the *Clergy in and about London*, as the Petitioners stile themselves, assure the Lords *that their private Rights are, as they ought to be, of small Account with them, in comparison of the* MISCHIEFS WHICH MAY REDOUND TO SOCIETY *from the Indulgence intended*, we may here perhaps be told the particular *Mischiefs* apprehended. *It seems to imply*, say they, *that Justice* may be *duly administred without the Intervention of any solemn Appeal to God.* Is this *The Mischief* that is of more Consequence than all the *Private Rights* of the Clergy? To be able to come at Truth without an Oath, — is *That* such a Mischief, when all the Primitive Christians for se-

* Mat. v. 37.

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veral Ages are known to have thought themſelves obliged never to ſwear: I'll tranſcribe the Words of the Great *Grotius*, ſo often cited with Applauſe, 'Ju-'ſtinus ait, &c. *Juſtin* ſays that Chriſti-'ans ſwear not at all; and *Chryſoſtom* 'from the Text in *Matthew*, *'Tis not* 'lawful to ſwear at all, or to impoſe a 'Neceſſity of an Oath. The ſame, on the '7th to the *Romans*, *He forbids not Per-'jury, but to ſwear at all*: And in his '8th, about *Statues*, *God hath command-'ed not to ſwear at all.* You may read 'the ſame Things in *Hilary*, *Ambroſe*, '*Jerom*, *Chromatius*, *Oecumenius*, *Theo-'phylact*, *Euthymius*. In *Euſebius* one '*Baſilides* contemporary with *Origen*, be-'ing requir'd to ſwear, ſaid, that *He* '*was a Chriſtian, therefore 'twas not law-'ful for him to ſwear.*' If we maintain the Principles which They did, and put them into Practice, and conceive that That is not lawful for a Chriſtian in any Age which was ever unlawful for them in any, we think that we are removing an Indignity from the Name of Chriſtians, and at the ſame Time do no Prejudice to any Man.

Government may certainly be ſupported without any ſolemn Appeal to God as Witneſs of the Truth of what is ſaid.

For

For Government requires *Oaths* only to find out the Truth of Facts; and if This End may be answer'd as well without such solemn Appeals, This Good at least would be attained, that That heinous and abominable Sin of *Perjury* would very much be lessen'd. 'Tis not for me, or our Friends to presume to advise so good, so great, so wise a Legislature as we now enjoy. But yet I cannot but believe, that were all our *Custom-House Oaths* repealed, and all the Oaths, which in many other Places are look'd upon as *Oaths of Form*, quite laid aside, and some other Method contriv'd (which may with Ease be learnt from our Neighbours in *Holland*) for Information of the Value of Goods imported and exported, *&c.* 'twould turn much more to the Advantage and Interest of the Government, and not be such a Reproach and Indignity to the Christian Name. However this may be, do Oaths necessarily and certainly discover the Truth? Or, when in Suits at Law, or in Courts of Justice, Both Sides swear to the Truth of each Part of a Contradiction, is That sufficient to determine any Point? No, every Day's Experience convinces us of the contrary; and whilst we hear of *Swearing Non-Jurors*, of Men who declare that they think

think themſelves free from the Obligations of their Oaths after they have taken them, we are ſure that Juſtice *may be duly* adminiſtred without them.

If a Man be guilty of *Perjury*, 'twill be ſaid that he incurs a ſevere Penalty. He is to forfeit *Twenty Pound, ſuffer Six Months Impriſonment without Bail, and be ever after diſabled to give Evidence, until the Judgment given againſt him be reverſed*; or perhaps *he is to ſtand in the Pillory for an Hour*. If this be the Legal Puniſhment of wilful *Perjury*, let it be the Legal Puniſhment of a wilful Breach of a *ſimple Affirmation*, and what poſſible Prejudice can any Member of the Society ſuffer in his Property? When our *Affirmation* was granted us, this in Truth was the Penalty, and a very juſt one it was; nor has any one of our Friends complain'd of That, which all agree to be neceſſary to the Ends of Government, how much ſoever They have complain'd of the *Oath* impos'd upon their Conſciences.

The Petitioners go on, and ſay, that *They are firmly perſuaded that an Oath was* inſtituted by God himſelf, *as the ſureſt Bond of Fidelity amongſt Men.*

What? Did *God* himſelf *inſtitute* Oaths? Surely theſe Men of *Learning* talk of

the *Inſtitutions of God*, as if They had ſome Edition of his Will unknown to other People. In what Chapter of the Bible does this occur? Is it contained in thoſe Words of Jeſus Chriſt, *Swear not at all?* Or, in thoſe of the Apoſtle *James*, *Above all Things, my Brethren, ſwear not?* Or, is it in the Old Teſtament, in the Law given to the *Jews*? If it be there, and there was inſtituted, yet what is That to Chriſtians? unleſs you will ſay that every Thing allowed to the *Jews* remains ſtill a poſitive Duty upon *us*. If an Oath be an *Inſtitution of God himſelf*, and therefore obligatory, it muſt be delivered to us either by Chriſt or his Apoſtles; ſince all Inſtitutions, delivered by *Moſes* to the *Jewiſh* Nation, ceas'd with their Temple and Conſtitution. But no *ſuch* Inſtitution occurs to my Memory; nor can I collect any Text in the Goſpels or Epiſtles, unleſs ſome Man of Learning ſhould read the Text of the Apoſtle *James* thus, *Above all Things my Brethren Swear*, leaving out that little Particle, *not*, as inſignificant or trifling. A Piece of prophane Criticiſm, that might be juſtified by the Methods which a late Writer, *Francis Hare*, commonly call'd, The Dean of *Worceſter*, has taken to *corrupt* the Word

of God. If the Miniſters ſhould urge any Texts out of the Law of *Moſes* to prove that *Oaths were* inſtituted by God himſelf *as the ſureſt Bond of Fidelity amongſt Men*; I would ask, whence came thoſe *Oaths* that we meet with long *before* the *Moſaic* Law? Whence came They amongſt Men who were Strangers to the God of Heaven? The Heathen *Abimelech*, and *Phicol the Captain of his Hoſt*, Gen. xxi. 22. deſire *Abraham* to *ſwear unto him by God, that thou wilt not deal falſly with me, nor with my Son*, &c. *And* Abraham *ſaid, I will ſwear.* Had *Abraham* deſired this of *Abimelech*, it might have been pretended that he had had this Inſtitution from God; but as it was moved by an *Heathen*, by one who was an Alien from the People of God, 'tis evident that Oaths were in Uſe before any Inſtitution of them by God, and were Expedients found out by wicked, corrupt Heathen *Men*, to engage one another more ſtrictly in Times of Ignorance, Wickedneſs, and Idolatry.

The next Motive, and the *chief* one to theſe Petitioners, to apply to the Lords againſt our Friends was, their *ſerious Concern leſt the Minds of good Men ſhould be grieved and wounded, and the Enemies of Chriſtianity triumph, if they ſhould*

ſee ſuch Condeſcentions made by a Chriſtian Legiſlature to a Sett of Men who renounce *the* Divine Inſtitutions *of Chriſt, particularly That, by which the Faithful are initiated into His Religion, and denominated Chriſtians.*

I do not deſign to debate with the Petitioners, whether we, or they, are right in the Interpretation of thoſe Texts of Scripture which concern *Water-Baptiſm*; tho' I will add, that 'twill be hard to prove the Neceſſity of *baptizing*, even in *your* Way of Reaſoning, unleſs in Caſes of Converts from *Heatheniſm* or *Judaiſm*. However, admitting that our Friends are miſtaken, ought they to be excluded from Indulgence in the Caſe of an Oath, becauſe they reject Baptiſm? If the Failings or Faults of Men in any Point of Opinion, not detrimental to the State, be not ſufficient to deprive them of the Benefits of the Community, why ſhould we ſuffer for our Miſtakes, or invincible Errors, in a Point which all are agreed in thus far, that it has *no Relation* to Civil Matters? Suppoſe that *we* are not worthy in your Account to be *denominated Chriſtians*; are thoſe Men worthy to be *denominated* ſuch, who are guilty of *Adultery, Fornication, Variance, Emulations, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, Hereſies,*

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Envyings, Murthers, Drunkenneſs, Revellings, and ſuch like? If then the Reaſon why we ſhould not have ſuch *Condeſcenſions made* to us, be, becauſe we are not worthy to be *denominated Chriſtians*, 'twill follow, that very few Men in the Nation ought to have any Indulgence, becauſe, I fear, on Account of one Vice or other, prohibited by the Apoſtle, very few are worthy of that ſacred Name. Immoralities are as oppoſite to the Goſpel *at leaſt* as erroneous Opinions; and 'tis more expreſly ſaid, that thoſe who do ſuch Things ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of Heaven, than 'tis ſaid any where of a Miſtake about, or a Neglect of, *Water-Baptiſm*.

But put the Caſe that we were *Heathens*, and ſtood in no immediate Relation at all to Jeſus Chriſt, 'twill not follow from thence, that we ought not to be indulg'd in the Point in Hand. Where there are great Numbers of Men in a Community, who never are burthenſome to the Society, and who enjoy a proportionable Share of Property in it; Men who deſire no Places or Preferments in it; Men who contribute equally with others to the Expences of the Government, and leave without Conteſt the Drawback of Honours, Places, or Penſions

to

to others, They have the beſt Right of any to *Indulgence*, becauſe they bear equal Burthens, and do not deſire to ſhare the Profits with other Men. If *we* in *our* Way bear our Teſtimony by *ſimple Affirmation*, and That be the Method rooted in *our* Conſciences; *ſimple Affirmation* is as ſecure a Method to arrive at Truth amongſt *our* Friends, as the uſual Methods of Oaths are amongſt other People. The State therefore, which lays hold of the reſpective Methods amongſt Men to diſcover, or ſecure, Truth, and Right, and Property, in their Courts of Juſtice, may without any Inconvenience allow us an Indulgence in *this* Caſe, upon the ſame Principles that it allows and requires an honeſt conſcientious Information in all.

Ye proceed to tell us your Apprehenſions, that *good Men may be griev'd if they ſhall ſee ſuch Condeſcenſions made by a* Chriſtian Legiſlature, *to a Sect of Men who cannot, according to the Uniform Judgment and Practice of the Catholick Church, be deemed worthy of that ſacred Name.*

We may perhaps be condemn'd by the *Catholick Church* for ought I know, but what is That to the Caſe in hand? It might ſerve indeed (if That was the View)

View) to inflame the Paſſions of Men; to ſtir up the ignorant, heady, unthinking Populace againſt us: It might ſerve in a *Popiſh* idolatrous Country, where the Words *Catholick Church* have a ſecret Charm, which inſpires the People, and the Prieſts too, with Fury and Madneſs. But the Indulgence deſired, was deſired for Men under the Influence of *Conſcience*, which is an Authority ſuperior to that of the *Catholick Church*: 'Twas deſired by Men, who profeſs Themſelves ſincere Followers of Jeſus Chriſt, whoſe Authority likewiſe is reputed by Them, *in Reality and not in Words only*, much greater than That of the *Catholick Church*: And laſtly, 'twas deſir'd by Men, who whether They be worthy, or unworthy, of that *ſacred Name* of Chriſtians, yet ſcruple not to make Their *Affirmation* as Solemn, and as Obligatory, as any other Chriſtian's *Oaths*, and the Breach of it as Penal as is their Perjury.

The reſt of the Petition contains little elſe except the Miniſters Fears, that our *Sect would multiply* by means of this *extraordinary Indulgence*; and that other Perſons may be *tempted to profeſs themſelves* Quakers, *in order to exempt themſelves from the Obligations of Oaths, and to ſtand upon a Foot of Privilege, not allowed*

lowed to the beſt Chriſtians *and* Subjects *in the Kingdom.*

If Men be tempted to profeſs themſelves our Friends on this Account, what Advantage can they propoſe, unleſs they really think it *unlawful* to take an Oath? Our Friends are not to be exempted from giving their Teſtimony in Courts of Juſtice: Nor are they exempt from Proſecutions, nor from Puniſhments, if they *affirm* falſly. To imagine therefore that any but ſtrictly conſcientious Men ſhould come over to our Perſuaſion, in order to exempt themſelves from the Obligations of Oaths, is abſurd; and the *Affirmation* of ſuch is, to the State, as great a Security of Right and Truth, as any Oaths can be.

No wonder then that the Noble Lords rejected a Petition ſo groundleſs, ſo juſtly exceptionable, ſo much calculated for a Violence upon the Conſciences of ſo many Thouſands; and in their Great Wiſdom, Goodneſs, and Juſtice, gave their Conſent to the paſſing a Bill, which relieves ſo many, and can't poſſibly do any Harm to the Public.

But how abſurd ſoever this Petition was, there were ſome of the Noble Lords, who were of Opinion that it ought not to have been rejected as it

was;

was; and neither you nor *They*, I hope, can take it amiss of me, if I proceed next to examine the Force of them, as apply'd to the present Case.

1st. *The Right of Petitioning in a Legal Manner, to Legal Purposes, does appertain by Law and Usage to the free People of this Realm. Nor are the* Clergy *less privileg'd in Relation to the Exercise of this Right, than any other of his Majesty's Subjects. On the contrary, we believe them as* worthy *of* enjoying *it, and as* capable *of* exerting *it to* wise and good Ends, *as any Rank of private Men in the Kingdom.*

The *Fourth* Reason is, that as the Clergy of *London* have *Opportunities of observing and knowing what may be stir'd in Parliament to the Prejudice of their Order*; so it *becomes them to make use of that Advantage in behalf of their distant Brethren*; *especially at a Time when the* Representatives *of the* Clergy *are not attending in* Convocation, *and in a Readiness to exert their* known Right *of applying to the Legislature on all such Occasions.*

The *Fifth* Reason is still more remarkable: *The* London Clergy, from whence the Petition came, *are and have been always esteem'd of* great Consideration.—*From this* Body of Men *have pro-*

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ceeded many of the moſt eminent Lights *of the Church, and* Ornaments *of the* Biſhops Bench; *eſpecially ſince the Revolution; and in the Reign preceding it, their* never to be forgotten Labours put a ſtop *to the Torrent of* Popery.

I have joined theſe *Three* together, and now will examine their Force.

1. If the *Sect* of the Quakers are not allowed to be under Scruples in Point of an Oath, becauſe *ſome* of them have ſhewn no Uneaſineſs in the former ſolemn Affirmation, (which is the 6th Reaſon the Noble Lords gave againſt paſſing the Bill) then I argue by Parity of Reaſon, that *forty or fifty* private Men, petitioning in the preſent Manner, are not The Clergy: And conſequently, tho' The Clergy may *be worthy of enjoying* a Right of Petitioning, and are *capable of exerting it to wiſe and good Ends*, yet theſe *few may be* as *unworthy*, and as errant Enemies to all that is valuable in a well conſtituted Government, *as the ſame Number of any Rank of private Men in the Kingdom.*

2. Allowing the Clergy of *London* to *be always eſteem'd of great Conſideration*, yet what Title have theſe *Petitioners* to that Name? There are a great many above a hundred Pariſhes in *London*, and each

each of them has one Principal, called either Parſon, or Vicar, or by ſome other Name known amongſt your People. And of theſe I find not above a Dozen or Fifteen in the printed Catalogues. Were theſe Petitioners then the Repreſentatives of the reſt? Or, by what Authority did they preſume to aſſume the Title of *The Clergy in and about* London? The reſt are Curates, or Lecturers, or *ſine nomine Vulgus*, and bear not the ſame Proportion to the reſt of *Their* Tribe, as even the Parſons do to the abſent Ones, who knew nothing of the Matter.

3. But ſtill; allowing farther that theſe may be called, by the Help of ſome Trick of Art, *The Clergy in and about* London, why are theſe ſo much to be valued above others? Why truly—*From this Body of Men have proceeded many of the moſt eminent* LIGHTS *of the Church, and Ornaments of the Biſhops Bench.* Suppoſe our Friend *John Gurney* had argued thus before the Noble Lords two Years ago,—'The Lords ought to have receiv'd the '*Norwich* Weavers Petition againſt the 'Callicoes, becauſe from *Norwich* had 'proceeded that *moſt eminent Light of the* 'Church Matthew Parker, *whoſe Father* 'was an honeſt and free Citizen of Nor-'wich, *and by Trade a* Calender of Stuffs,—

Would the Noble Lords have admitted this Reaſoning? Yet methinks, 'tis juſt Parallel, why the Petition of the *London Clergy* ſhould be receiv'd, becauſe, forſooth, *very eminent Lights of the Church have proceeded thence, and Ornaments of the Biſhops Bench.* There are in the Lords Houſe ſome very *eminent Ornaments of the Biſhops Bench,* who are, I am told, of the *Clergy in and about London.* I have not heard that *they* were ſo much as *ſummoned,* or let into the Secret of this Petition: And if the Report be true, One Biſhop publickly aſſerted it before the Noble Lords, that He had no Knowledge, or Notice of this haſty Aſſembly. To have acquainted *the Ornaments of the Biſhops Bench,* would have been very natural and eaſy; and would, methinks, have *recommended* the *Petition,* had not other Reaſons ſwayed the Petitioners, beſides what here are mentioned.

4. Yes; but, *Their never to be forgotten Labours put a ſtop to the Torrent of Popery,* in the Reign preceding the Revolution. You can tell *whoſe* Labours, no doubt. Was it His, whom they call, Dr. *Moſs?* Or his, who is named *Thomas Gooch?* Or was it the Labour of thoſe *Hirelings,* who are called *Curates?* I do not remember any of their Names

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in King *James*'s Time; and therefore wonder what *Merit* They can claim from their Attacks of *Popery*. Yes: But tho' Theſe Men did not then live, yet their Predeceſſors did. I admit it: But then I ſay, that *at the Beginning of Queen* Elizabeth's *Reign, the* London Miniſters *ſet out their Declaration againſt the* Apparel preſcribed: *a Labour never to be forgotten!* yet I do not find it makes any Matter of Merit now. I cannot but think it as juſt for *our Friends* to urge, that the *London Clergy* are now to be valued, becauſe their Predeceſſors once declared againſt the *Apparel preſcribed*, as that the preſent Set of Men are to be valued, becauſe their Predeceſſors heroically oppos'd a Torrent, which would have ſwept away Them, and Their Religion, and Their *Tithes* too.

5. Their Petition is it ſeems to be admitted, becauſe *the Repreſentatives of the Clergy are not attending in Convocation.* I do not pretend to underſtand your Conſtitution much; nor to know what Neceſſity there is for the Clergy to attend the Parliament continually. But yet methinks the Chief of You, who ſtiles himſelf *W. Cant.* (in a great Book, wrote on Purpoſe to prove that the Clergy have no Right to meet in Convocation as oft as the Parliament meets,) has given

given the World but little Encouragement to hope for much Good from the Meetings of the Clergy. He knows and ſpeaks openly of your Tempers, your Peeviſhneſs and Reſentments, and is acquainted with your Factions and Deſigns, much better than the Noble Lords can be. '*Pride and ill Nature commonly* '*domineer in them*,' i. e. Synods. *Appeal*, Pref. p. 24. '*They judge not according* '*to* Truth *or* Evidence, *but with* Re- 'ſpect of Perſons, *and every one oppoſes* '*what another of a* different Perſuaſion *ei-* '*ther* moves *or* approves of.' *Authority of Chriſtian Princes*, p. 316. But I care not to repeat this open Cenſure of your *Spirit*, ſince *Charity obligeth me to cover a Multitude of Sins*. Not that I would by This be thought to cenſure or condemn your whole Body; I know my ſelf ſeveral particular Perſons of great Worth and Probity among Them; and how much ſoever I, or our Friends, differ from Them, yet we ſhall always reſpect and eſteem them as truly valuable Men. But then, ſince the Clergy are not *attending in Convocation*; *That* is Demonſtration to me, that the King judges it *needleſs* at preſent; that He knows of no Buſineſs, either proper for, or worthy of, that Meeting; that *He ſees*, as your *Archbiſhop* ſays, but *too much of your* Tem-

Tempers; is too gracious to you; *and has too great a Concern for the* Church's Good *to ſuffer you to do your ſelves and the Church a* Miſchief.' *Appeal*, p. 121.

But becauſe this Clamour has been artfully of late fomented, as well by private Perſons, as *now* in this Manner by theſe diſſenting Lords, I'll tranſcribe from the Archbiſhop's *Authority of Chriſtian Princes*, juſt the Contents of what he has largely prov'd. 'That the Con-'vocation cannot meet without the '*King's Writ*: That being ſummon'd, it 'lies in *his Breaſt* whether they ſhall ſit 'or not: That the Convocation has no 'Right to ſit *as often* as the *Parliament* 'meets: That the main End for which 'Synods are neceſſary to be aſſembled, is 'either to eſtabliſh the *Faith*, and to 'declare the *Unity* of the Church in 'Matters of *Doctrine*; or to adviſe and 'aſſiſt the Civil Magiſtrate in Things 'pertaining to the *Diſcipline* of it: That '*neither* of theſe Ends make it *neceſſary* 'or *uſeful* at preſent: That there may be '*Times* in which 'twould be unadviſea-'ble to aſſemble it, *viz.* Times of *Diſ-'content*, &c. That neither *Scepticiſm*, *Deiſm*, nor even *Atheiſm* it ſelf, is ſuf-'ficient Occaſion *at preſent* to let it 'meet: That 'tis not neceſſary to con-

'demn

'demn thoſe who plead for a *General* '*Toleration*; nor to call ſome particu-'lar Perſons to *Account*.' Theſe and many other Things, which deſerve your Notice, and the Notice of theſe Complainers, are fully and largely proved by your own *Archbiſhop*, and with ſo much Skill and Knowledge of our Hiſtory and Church Conſtitution, that His Enemies, in my Opinion, may with more Eaſe rail at Him, and cry out for your Convocation to ſit, than they can anſwer the Reaſons given by Him, why they ſhould *not* ſit.

6. Whereas the *Situation* of the *London* Clergy makes them capable of *obſerving and knowing what is, or may be ſtirr'd in Parliament, to the Prejudice of their Order*; and therefore 'tis concluded that their Petition ought not to have been rejected;—Juſt the contrary, *in the preſent Caſe*, ought to be infer'd, if there be any Force in this way of Reaſoning, *viz.* — Becauſe the Petition is *not* of Men who are entitled to that Name, or have that advantageous Situation; becauſe the *London Clergy* really acquieſced in the good Deſign of the Parliament; and by their not appearing to the contrary, plainly conſented, that They were under no ſuch Apprehenſions as theſe

Men

Men would insinuate; therefore the Petition ought to be *rejected.*

The *Second* and *Third* Reasons assigned for the Reception of the Petition, are founded upon the Supposition, that it was the Act of the Clergy, and that the Bill might affect *their Interests.* Now

To me it seems an *Affront* to the House of Lords, an *Indignity* offer'd to that Wise and Great Assembly, for the Petitioners to assume a *Name* They could have no Pretensions to; and by Virtue of such a Fallacy, to think to impose on the Legislature of the Nation. The Petition therefore must be offensive as to the *Manner* of it; and as to its *Matter,* 'twas ridiculously absurd, as I have already proved.

The *last* Reason assign'd is, *That by Experience we find, that the treating in this manner a Petition from any* great and considerable Body, *is not the best way to—extinguish the Uneasiness that occasioned it; a very contrary Effect having followed from the rejecting a Petition lately offered by the City of* London.

The Difference of the Cases seems, to our Friends, so palpable, that we are really surprized to hear That Affair revived. A regular Petition was drawn up

by the *Mayor* and *Aldermen*, and *Common Council* of the City: (a very *great and conſiderable Body* indeed!) in an Affair that, in their Opinion, manifeſtly concerned the Liberty and Property of Millions of People inhabiting this Town: This was preſented by the Proper Officer, and in a Manner becoming the Occaſion. The Noble Lords, not deeming the Petition *regular*, or not ſeeing the Matter of it in that diſadvantageous Light that the City did, rejected at That Time the Petition. In the preſent Caſe, a Petition is drawn up by we know not whom; No *Biſhop* at the Head of theſe Men; No *Arch-deacon*; a tumultuary Meeting call'd; not expected or thought of by the proper Perſons who were to appear; When they *did* appear, no Time allowed to *read* it carefully; Every one call'd upon to *ſign*, not to examine; Notice was given *That Morning* only, in which it was to be delivered in to the Houſe of Lords; The Biſhops, who, in the Capacity of Miniſters, had a Right to be ſummoned, were not at all appriz'd of the Matter; The Secret was imparted to only truſty Friends; and in ſuch Hurry was it executed, that ſcarce any of the Rectors of Pariſhes cou'd attend it. In the *Former* Caſe, the City

Magi-

Magiſtrates and Officers legally aſſembled, were properly, *The City*. In the *latter* Caſe, a *Minority* of the Clergy aſſume the Name of the *Whole*; and in little more Propriety can be called *The Clergy of* London, than any *One* Man can be call'd ſo.

I ſhall not beſtow any more Time on theſe Reaſons for *rejecting a Petition* ſo abſurd; but ſhall examine a little more carefully the *Reaſons againſt* the *Bill it ſelf:* which if They were good, are good or ought to be ſo ſtill, even though the Bill be paſſed.

There is, I think, the more Reaſon for this, becauſe being printed, and ſpread about the Nation, and being ſuch as determined Eleven Lords to *enter a Proteſt*, one of which is called an *Archbiſhop*, and Two are called *Biſhops*; and becauſe The *Other*, who is call'd Archbiſhop of *Cant.* and one more, commonly call'd Biſhop of *Oxon*, did *Diſſent* from the Lords in this Affair,—This may ſeem to have great Authority amongſt You, and ſome of your People.

The *Firſt* Reaſon aſſign'd againſt the Bill, is, *Becauſe the* Privileges *allowed by this Bill to the Quakers*, are *without Example: and not indulged to them as the Leſs were, from Time to Time, and by*

Degrees; but are at once made perpetual.

The Reaſon then why *They* were *againſt* the Bill, is, becauſe 'tis made *perpetual*, and not *temporary* only; which is allowing the *Indulgence* in it ſelf, and differing only about a Circumſtance, which may be redreſſed at any Time, if the *State* really does ſuffer any Inconvenience by it.

But whereas theſe Noble Lords are pleas'd to ſay, that the Privilege allowed by this Bill *is without Example*; if by That They mean, that the Admiſſion to profeſs Fidelity without an Oath *here in England*, is without *Example*, I muſt beg leave to put them in Mind, that our *ſolemn Affirmation* is diſtinguiſhed from an *Oath* in our Laws; and conſequently to give Teſtimony *without an Oath*, is not *without Example*, as is here ſuggeſted. Or if it be ſaid, as is in reality here affirm'd, that our *ſolemn Affirmation* is an *Oath*, excepting only *ſome Formalities with reſpect to the manner of wording it, and taking it*; then the Lords muſt bear us witneſs, in direct Contradiction to their own Reaſon here aſſign'd, *viz.* that theſe great Privileges *have* been indulged to us from Time to Time, and *by Degrees:* For at firſt we

were

were under the common Ties of Oaths, and had no Indulgence at all, how much ſoever we deem'd them *Unchriſtian*, and ſinful. Then were we indulged ſo far as to be *diſpens'd with as to ſome Formalities, with reſpect to the Manner of wording and taking an Oath*: And now at length, (Thanks be to the Legiſlature of the Nation, which has had a due Senſe of Conſcience,) we are *further* indulged, and our *ſimple Affirmation* is admitted in the ſtead of what was in reality an Oath, to which We were forc'd to comply.

If the Lords mean, when they ſay, that the Privileges allowed to the *Quakers* by this Bill are *without Example*, that there is no Inſtance of Privileges being made *perpetual* at once: We beg leave to ſay, that there are *many Inſtances* of this Nature in the *Statute Books*, which 'twould be tedious, becauſe needleſs, here to mention.

If They mean, that 'tis *without Example Any where*, to indulge any Set of Men ſo far, as to admit them *to profeſs Fidelity, and to give Teſtimony upon their* ſimple Affirmation; here too I muſt beg leave to put them in mind, that in *Holland* this Liberty is indulged.

In the Year 1710. the Canton of *Bern* thought fit to perſecute ſome *Men-*

noniſts

nonists that were ſetled in Their Country; and being unwilling to ſtain their Hands in innocent Blood, they ſent to the States of *Holland*, deſiring a Paſſport for Mr. *Ruyter*, with One Hundred and Fifty *Anabaptiſts*, that they might have a free Paſſage through their Country; and that They would write to the Admiralty of the *Maeſe* to be aſſiſtant to their Tranſportation into *America*. M. *St. Saphorin* delivered in a Memorial for this Purpoſe, in the Name of that Canton. Before *St. Saphorin* delivered in his Memorial, the States thought fit to interpoſe in behalf of theſe poor perſecuted People, and wrote a Letter, ſome Parts of which will be worth tranſcribing, for the Sake of the Teſtimony therein given.

'We have, *ſay the States*, examin'd 'the Conduct of the *Anabaptiſts*, and 'have found them by Experience, to be '*good* and *faithful* Subjects in our Coun-'try; of a *quiet*, *plain* and *ſincere* Man-'ner of *Life*, not medling with any 'Matters but what belong to them: On 'which Account we neither *could*, nor '*ought* to refuſe to ſo *good Subjects* our 'Interceſſion in Favour of their Bre-'thren." Then urging ſeveral Reaſons againſt Perſecution, they go on thus.

'And

'And whereas we are inform'd, that your Lordſhips lay *Three* Things to their Charge; 1ſt, That they do not own Magiſtracy to be agreeable to the Word of God, or the Tenour of the Chriſtian Religion. 2dly, *That they refuſe to* ſwear Fidelity *to the* Government, *and to confirm the Truth by* their Oaths, *when* cited *by the Magiſtrate.* 3dly, That they refuſe to *defend their* Country in Caſe of Neceſſity. It appears to us, That the Firſt of theſe Accuſations does not at all agree with the 13th Article of their Confeſſion of Faith: By which it is plain, that they have other and much better Sentiments of Obedience to Superiours. As to the Matter of *Oaths*; ſince They are of Opinion, that *Swearing is forbid them by the Word of God*, and that their *Declaration on their Veracity* has the ſame Force and Effect with *Them* as *Oaths* with *Others*: It follows by Conſequence, That *this Opinion can be of no Prejudice to the Publick.* And as to the 3d, We think it too far ſtretcht, ſince they do not abſolutely refuſe to defend their Country, but think that the Profeſſion and *Uſe of Arms for Revenge and Ruin* of others, is not allowed of by the Laws of the Goſpel;

'and

' and that it may ſuffice that they pay
' all *Taxes* which are laid upon them, by
' which a State may be defended.'

Seven Days after the Date of this Letter, *St. Saphorin* deliver'd in his Memorial before mentioned. Upon which the States, after mature Deliberation, thought fit to give the following Anſwer: ' That the States are of Opinion,
' That every Man ſhould be left to his
' Freedom in Matters of Religion, and
' that no Body ſhould be perſecuted or
' puniſh'd for ſuch Matters, if his Doc-
' trine and Conduct does *not tend to the*
' *Prejudice of the Country* in which he
' lives. And ſeeing that *theſe Anabap-*
' *tiſts muſt* be *reckoned of that Number*,
' their High Mightineſſes (having *found*
' *by Experience* that — they have *always*
' *behav'd themſelves as very good Subjects*)
' cannot therefore be any way aſſiſting
' towards tranſporting the aforeſaid *A-*
' *nabaptiſts* to *America*, &c.

When the Letter from the *States* was preſented by Mr. *Runckel*, he deliver'd in likewiſe a Memorial, in which, among other Things, he bore them this Teſtimony, that they were *good* and *faithful* Subjects and *peaceable* People, who *meddle not in the leaſt with what does not belong to them.*

The

The Reſult of this Affair was, the poor *Mennoniſts* were ſent down the *Rhine* chain'd together; and when they came to *Holland*, they were receiv'd with open Arms by their Brethren there, and from that Inſtant were incorporated Members of the States of *Holland*.

Here then is an *Example*, and one which *ought never to be forgot*, of the Teſtimony of a *State* in behalf of a People, who refus'd to take an *Oath*! The *Dutch* are apprehenſive of no ſuch terrible Conſequences to *their* State, from an *Indulgence* of this Nature. They have had *many Years Experience of the Conduct* of a Set of Men, who hold *ſwearing* Unlawful; and their Behaviour has been ſo good, that, at *their Interceſſion*, the *States* interpos'd in Behalf of Others of the ſame Perſuaſion, and at length admitted them as Subjects. A Labour of Love never-to-be-forgotten, and which muſt endear thoſe true Patrons of Liberty of Conſcience, to all that know what 'tis to be a Chriſtian; and to all that have an Averſion to the Beaſt upon the Seven Hills, *the Mother of Harlots, who is drunk with the Blood of the Saints, and with the Blood of the Martyrs of Jeſus.*

The ſecond Reaſon againſt this Bill is, 'Becauſe we look upon the *Quakers*,

'who reject *the Two* Sacraments of 'Chriſt, and are, as far as they ſo do, 'unworthy of the Name of Chriſtians, 'to be on that account, unworthy alſo 'of receiving ſuch diſtinguiſhing Marks 'of Favour.

Be it ſo, that we are *unworthy the Name of Chriſtians* on the Account here mentioned, yet ſurely we are intitled to that Name on other Accounts, as Witneſſes and Martyrs of Jeſus. And here I muſt obſerve the Difference between your Account of us, and That of theſe Noble Lords, in whom the Spirit of the *Petitioners* is not. In your *Petition* you *abſolutely* deny us to be *worthy of that ſacred Name* of Chriſtians, *becauſe*, as ye ſay, we *renounce the Inſtitutions of Chriſt*. The *Lords*, having a much truer Senſe of Chriſtianity than the *Petitioners*, ſay that we are, *as far as* we do reject the Two Sacraments of Chriſt, *unworthy the Name of Chriſtians*. The Lords admitting us to *be Chriſtians*, tho' imperfect ones; the Miniſters abſolutely denying us to be Chriſtians. The Lord rebuke them for ſuch their Uncharitableneſs.

'Tis not the Time here to enter upon our Reaſons for our Practice: But let me ask, what has the rejecting of *Water Baptiſm* to do with the Indulgence deſired

by,

by, and at laſt granted to, us? Whenever the Legiſlature will univerſally refuſe all Favours to Men that are not *perfect*, *good*, Chriſtians in *every reſpect*; I may venture to engage for our Friends, that We will not deſire any *diſtinguiſhing Marks of Favour* at all. In a State, *diſtinguiſhing Marks of Favour* may, we humbly conceive, be beſt ſhewn to ſuch Men, as are *peaceable*, and *good* Subjects; to Men whoſe Conduct has been ſuch, as not to be contending and diſputing for Places and Honours, and great Titles; to Men who are quiet, and not given to change; to Men who think it their Duty to obey their Superiors in all Things lawful; and yet will not forſake their Religion, or Conſcience, on account of any Difficulties or Diſcouragements that may be laid upon them. Such Men, we are humbly of Opinion, are really better Subjects, and more deſerving of *diſtinguiſhing Marks of Favour*, from any *Civil* Government, (whatever their Notions or Practices may be in Religion, of which they muſt give an Account to God, and to Him alone) than Men who admit the Two Sacraments of Chriſt, and yet are perplexing the Public Affairs, and rendring every Step of our Governors as unacceptable to the People, as 'tis poſſible for Them to do.

The

The *Third* Reaſon is, 'Becauſe the 'Quakers—have not given the Evidence 'by Law required, of their Belief of the 'Divinity of Chriſt'—That 'they will en-'courage themſelves yet farther in their 'Averſion, to ſubſcribe that Profeſſion 'of Chriſtian Belief.' —That 'it may 'reflect ſome Diſhonour on the Chriſtian 'Faith, if the Evidence given by ſuch 'Perſons on their bare Word, ſhall by 'Law be judged of equal Credit with 'the ſolemn Oath of an acknowledged 'Chriſtian, and ſincere Member of the 'Eſtabliſhed Communion'. To this I reply,

1. If not one *Quaker* in an Hundred hath ſubſcribed the Profeſſion of Chriſtian Belief directed by that Act, as is here aſſerted, I cannot but think the Reaſon to be, that no Body has call'd in queſtion Our *Belief* in this Point. The Act, in the 1ſt of *William* and *Mary*, does not, we apprehend, oblige us to go before a Juſtice of the Peace, and there *unasked* make the Profeſſion enjoined; but it enjoins us to ſubſcribe that Profeſſion, BEING THEREUNTO REQUIRED. Now has this Subſcription been REQUIRED of one *Quaker* in an Hundred? If not, what can this Suggeſtion mean, but only to intimate

to

to the World, that we do *not believe* what we do declare that we *do believe?* For

2. I appeal to the *Apology* of *Robert Barclay*, whether we do not believe the Divinity of Chriſt. He ſays, *P.* 227. 'Hence He is fitly called, *The Mediator* 'betwixt God and Man; for having been 'with God from all Eternity, *being him-* 'ſelf God, and alſo in time partaking of 'the Nature of Man, *&c.*' But I need not urge farther Evidence in a Caſe ſo clear.

3. Suppoſing that we did not believe the Divinity of Chriſt, that is no Argument why we ſhould not be indulged in the preſent Caſe. The State ſurely is as ſecure of the Honeſty of a Man who believes in God, and affirms the Truth of any Fact, as it can be, if the Man does, or does not, believe the *Divinity* of the Son. It ſeems not to me to be an eſſential Ingredient to the Idea of Honeſty, to believe either way in That Point; and therefore the Government may very well ſubſiſt, and may very ſeverely and juſtly puniſh Offenders, whether They believe that Doctrine or not.

4. What *Reflection* can it poſſibly be to the *Chriſtian Faith*, if our *Simple Affirmation* be judged of equal *Credit with*

the

the Oath *of any ſincere Member of the eſtabliſhed Communion*: All that the Government wants, is Truth: If This can be attain'd any way, their End is anſwered. Our *Affirmation*, or Another Man's *Oath*, is but a Mean to obtain the Knowledge of Truth: and if Both of them *Equally*, and but Equally tend to this, why ſhould not Both be of *equal Credit*. 'Tis an uſual Saying, That *the Word of an Honeſt Man is as good as his Bond*: And He muſt be a Stranger to the World, who would not rather take the *Word* of ſome Man, than a Thouſand Oaths of Others. But yet ſurely no one was ever ſo weak as to imagine it a *Diſhonour to the Chriſtian Faith*, that plain, naked Honeſty, is uſually prefer'd, even to a Proverb, before the Oaths of Numbers of acknowledged Chriſtians.

5. There ſeems in this Reaſon, to be a covert Intimation, artfully inſinuating a Notion, as if our Friends were not *acknowledged Chriſtians*, becauſe here their Evidence is oppos'd to That of *an acknowledged Chriſtian*. I cannot therefore omit to acquaint you, that in all the Laws of the Land relating to our Friends, we always were deem'd, and treated as ſuch. In an Act, 13 and 14 of *Charles* the

2d,

ad, we are treated as Perſons who go under the *Name of Separation*: 16 *Charles* 2, we are call'd *Sectaries*: 1 *William* and *Mary* we are called *Diſſenters from the Church of England*: And again, 7, 8 *William*, we are ſtiled by the ſame Name. Now *Heathens* or *Infidels* are never called *Diſſenters* from any Church; nor is it poſſible that the Legiſlature ſhould have given us the Titles of *Sectaries*, or *Separatiſts*, upon any other Principle, than that They always conceiv'd us to be *Fellow Chriſtians*, how imperfect ſoever. But as Theſe Inſtances are only conſequential, however clear, I ſhall annex an expreſs Teſtimony from the *Act of Toleration*, 1 *William* and *Mary*, wherein we are ordered, after a Declaration of Fidelity, to *ſubſcribe a Profeſſion of our CHRISTIAN Belief*. Surely this is acknowledging Us to be *Chriſtians*, or elſe how can we be obliged to *profeſs our Chriſtian Belief?* The Proteſters therefore here have made a very unaccountable Oppoſition between *Us* and *acknowledged Chriſtians*, when the very Laws of the Land do *acknowledge* us to be *Chriſtians*.

Laſtly, I muſt remark again, that the *Apprehenſions* of theſe Proteſters are, that 'twill *reflect a Diſhonour on the Chriſtian Faith*,

Faith, if our Affirmation ſhall be *judged of equal Credit with the Oath of — a ſincere Member of the Eſtabliſhed Communion.* As if in *England* there were no Other People but *Quakers*, and *Church of* England *Men.* If indeed theſe *Diſſenters* will aſſert the *Presbyterians* and *Independents* to be of the *Eſtabliſhed Communion*, Our Friends will inſiſt that We are likewiſe *Eſtabliſhed*, as much as They. Let but our Affirmation be judged of equal Credit with the Oath of any *Diſſenter* from the *Eſtabliſhed Communion*, and we ask no more; or if there be in the Law, any Difference betwixt the Oath of a ſincere Diſſenter, and of a ſincere Member of the Eſtabliſhed Communion, 'twould be of Service to the *Caſuiſts* to be let into that Secret.

The *Fourth* Reaſon is; 'Tis unreaſonable, that—where the Nobles, the Clergy, and Commons,—and even the Sovereign himſelf takes an Oath,—a particular Sect of Men, who refuſe to ſerve the State, either as Civil Officers, or Soldiers, ſhould be releas'd from that Obligation.' If we ſhould ask, *Why* 'tis *unreaſonable*, when we are ready and willing to make a Declaration of our Fidelity? The Proteſters add, 'Tis natural to expect, that Perſons thus indulged,

'ed—ſhould by Degrees be induced to-
'tally to withdraw their Allegiance, till
'they become as bad Subjects as Chri-
'ſtians'.

There wants, methinks, in this Argument nothing but *Charity*, and *Conſequence*. For ſurely Men that have *ſworn* Fidelity, have been *by Degrees induced totally to withdraw their Allegiance*, till *They too* have become very *bad Subjects*; and if our Declaration be as binding to us, as Oaths are to others, whatever can be ſuggeſted for the One, will be equally ſtrong for the Other.

But whatever there be of *Unreaſonableneſs* in this Affair, I muſt put the Miniſters in Mind, that the Man, whom you call Archbiſhop of *Canterbury*, himſelf was very ready and willing to come in to diſpenſing with our former Solemn Affirmation in all Points relating to the State, or to Public Matters: He was ſo gracious as to propoſe a Releaſe from our former Obligation, in Caſes of *Allegiance* and *Fealty* to the Crown, and in ſeveral other Caſes of very great Importance; tho' He was for binding an *Oath*, or an *Equivalent to an Oath*, upon us in Caſes of *Tithes*, and in ſome Matters of private Property. The Archbiſhop then cou'd not perceive this *Unreaſonableneſs*,

which the Proteſters intimate; ſince we ſhould have been the *ſame Subjects* in *his* Scheme, as we are in the preſent One, where our Indulgence is made, as it ought, Univerſal.

The *Fifth* Reaſon is '*That we know not* '*who are, or are not intitled to the Pri-* '*vileges*' granted by this Bill, *i. e.* who are *Quakers*, or not: So that '*Perſons* '*not really Quakers may ſhelter themſelves* '*under the Cover of that Name.*'

This too ſeems to us a meer groundleſs Suggeſtion. For ſuppoſing Perſons, not really *Quakers*, may ſhelter themſelves under that Name, what Intereſt, or what Advantage would it be? If a Man be liable to all the ſame Penalties upon a Falſification of his *Word*, as he is upon Falſification of his *Oath*, there is no great Danger of any Man's profeſſing himſelf a *Quaker*, *merely* to avoid an *Oath*; which can be of no Conſequence to Him, ſince he is ſubject ſtill to the Penalty of *Perjury*.

The *Sixth* Reaſon is founded upon a Suppoſition, that the *Quakers*, 'as a Sect, 'are really under no ſuch Scruples in Point 'of an Oath; — few of them having re-'fus'd to comply with their ſolemn Affir-'mation, equivalent to an Oath—and the 'Scruples of a few — ought not to be re-'garded;

'garded; eſpecially if continuing the Law 'now in Force, will probably extinguiſh 'thoſe Scruples.'

I think this Reaſon, as to its Foundation, ſo very groundleſs, that the Lords Proteſters aſſign the direct contrary to it in their next Reaſon, and in conſequence Themſelves confute Themſelves. Here They aſſert that the *Quakers* are really *under no* ſuch Scruples in Point of *an Oath*: Their next Reaſon ſays 'Nor can 'the *Quakers* be excepted in this Caſe '(*viz* of Swearing) *whoſe awful Appre-* '*henſions of an Oath* appear from their '*earneſt Endeavours to decline it.*' Are we then under ſuch Apprehenſions of an Oath, as to make us endeavour to *decline* an Oath, and yet at the ſame Time *under no Scruples* in Point of an Oath? Strange Contradiction! But yet this fencing in Argument, this maintaining *both* Sides of a Queſtion, goes for *right Reaſon*, when Men are to be painted odious, or the Number, not the Weight of Reaſons is to turn the Ballance.

But, 'continuing the Law now in 'Force will probably extinguiſh thoſe '*Scruples*, which ſome have of an Oath, 'and the Repeal of it will certainly give 'new Life and Strength to them.'

All that this amounts to is only a *Probability*, aſſerted on one Side, againſt an evident Fact on the other. Our Friends have always maintain'd, and avowed, the Unlawfulneſs of all Oaths; and the *Solemn Affirmation*, indulg'd us by Law for ſeveral Years paſt, has not had this Effect to *extinguiſh any Scruples*, relating to that Affair. On the contrary, we have ever deem'd our late Obligation to be like an Attempt to ſwear without ſwearing; in ſhort, an artful Impoſition that has made us very uneaſy, and deſirous to exert our utmoſt Endeavours to get rid of it. And ſince the Repeal of that Law has made our Conſciences eaſy, and can be no ways prejudicial to Truth, or to the Security of the Subjects Property, we ſhall ſtill retain thoſe awful Apprehenſions of an Oath, which we have at preſent; and not wound our Spirits by doing what Chriſt forbids us; nor ſhall we for the future (as many of us have done on this ſole Account) lye in Goals, to the Detriment of our Families, and of our common Country, whoſe Good is beſt provided for, when the Subjects are at Liberty, in an honeſt and induſtrious way, to gain their Livings.

The *Seventh* Reaſon urged againſt the Bill is——'That the Reverence of an Oath

'Oath hath been always obſerv'd to o-
'perate farther towards the Diſcovery of
'Truth, than any other Solemn Form of
'Aſſeveration'.

We are ready to acknowledge, That This is *generally* true; But then we ſay that this ariſes from the ill Principles, and ill Inſtructions, of People; who ſeem to be little ſenſible, that to *Lye* before God is a very heinous Sin, and will draw down as certainly his Wrath and Damnation upon the Guilty Perſon, as can any Crime whatever. Oaths themſelves are only Means deſign'd for the Diſcovery of Truth; But then if our Friends are ſo principled as to believe a *ſimple Affirmation* equally obligatory upon them as an Oath is upon the Generality of the World, and have Notions of an omnipreſent God ready to avenge himſelf upon the *Lyar*, as really as others conceive him to be ready to puniſh the *Perjurer*, their ſimple Affirmation muſt be in *Them* as good a Mean to diſcover Truth, as an *Oath* is. But of this, and of what follows in relation to our Refuſal to pay Tithes, and the Probability of our diſguiſing Truth in that particular Caſe, enough has been already ſaid.

There is but *one Reaſon more* aſſign'd, a very ſtrange one it is, why we ſhould have

have no Favour ſhewn us, tho' we are well affected to the Government; becauſe truly, 'This Inducement might be 'improved into a Reaſon for granting 'like Favours to *Deiſts*, *Arians*, *Jews*, 'and even to *Heathens* themſelves. 'Their Friendſhip, we preſume, would 'be cultivated at too great an Expence, 'if for the ſake of it, any Thing ſhou'd 'be done by the Legiſlature, which 'might weaken the Security of all Go-'vernments, an Oath; and, by that 'Means, do more Miſchief to the State 'in one Reſpect, than it brought Ad-'vantage in another'. The Force of this Reaſon, whatever it be, lies in this; That no Man, 'who is known to avow Prin-'ciples deſtructive of Chriſtianity, how-'ever uſeful he may otherwiſe be to 'the State, ought to be encouraged, 'by a Law purpoſely made in his Fa-'vour, to continue in thoſe Principles.'

Now, 1. Here is ſuch an Inſtance of —— as can't be accounted for, unleſs upon a Suppoſition which I know not whether I ought to admit, *viz.* That theſe *Proteſters* meant only to raiſe and foment Jealouſies and Uneaſineſs amongſt the People, and to work up their Paſſions againſt the Parliament and Adminiſtration. What is there in this Bill to *encourage*

courage out Friends to continue in our Principles? Or, is it *Encouragement*, not to puniſh Men for doing what their Conſciences dictate to them to be their Duty? Or, is this Law deſigned to *make* Men *continue* in their Principles, which is only to guard them from Penalties, when They *are* in them. Theſe are Expreſſions that can have no other Effect, than either to miſguide thoſe whom Paſſion againſt us may blind; or to encourage thoſe whom Faction and private Uneaſineſſes have already made Enemies to the Government. But,

2. What do the Noble Lords mean by ſaying, that this may be improv'd into a Reaſon for granting like Favours to the *Jews*? Are not the *Jews* indulged ſo far, as to give their Evidence in their own Way, in a Way that their Conſciences will permit? And are not They as much profeſſed Enemies to Chriſtianity, as any *Deiſts* can be? I do not perceive any Reaſon, why a Chriſtian Nation ſhould refuſe ſuch Privileges, as are conſiſtent with Public Peace and Safety, to the *Jews*, becauſe they maintain Principles *deſtructive of Chriſtianity*: Nor do I believe that our Nation does now ſuffer any real Detriment from the Privileges which the *Jews* enjoy. And if They

cou'd be made *more useful* and *serviceable* to the Public, by means of any farther Favour granted, the Public would reap the Benefit, and not be a Sufferer by them.

3. Since the Lords insist so much on this Topick, let us put the Case that such Favours were granted to these Men as are not prejudicial to the State; If these Men are really Friends to the Government, and serviceable to it, what Law of Reason, or of Scripture, forbids it? The Business of Government can't be carry'd on without certain Helps; there must be Wisdom and Courage in Superiors; in Inferiors a Readiness to obey in all lawful Commands, to assist with Intelligence, and Interest; and to concur with whatever tends to the Public Weal. Life and Liberty, and the quiet Possession of Property, is all the Civil Magistrate is concern'd in; and consequently his Rewards and Punishments are in Justice due to such Members of Society, as on the one Hand promote, or on the other Hand destroy, these Ends. Were a *Jew* to give Intelligence to the Magistrate of any Sedition stirring up, and to put Him into a sure Method of preventing a great deal of Bloodshed, and in Consequence a great deal of Danger to the

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Government, would not this be a valuable Service, for which he ought to be rewarded? What has his Religion to do in this Caſe? Or why ſhould he be deprived of the Benefit of his Virtue, becauſe in other Things he does not practice, or believe, as we do?

The Rewards of States, or of Civil Powers, juſt like their Penalties, are confined to the preſent Life, and to the Things which belong unto it. Their Power is confined to outward Force; nor can it extend to make a Man believe, or think, or underſtand, otherwiſe than he does: Nor can it make any Impreſſion upon the Mind, except what Joy or Pain can effect. In the right Diſtribution therefore of what the Civil Power *can* do, lies the Magiſtrate's Wiſdom and Goodneſs: and hence the Objects of his Favour or Diſpleaſure are viſible. Every Man who has Will and Power, and Application to ſerve the Civil Intereſts of Mankind, ought to be ſerv'd by their Civil Intereſts again, *i. e.* rewarded; and every Man who applies himſelf to the Diſturbance of the Lives or Properties of Men, ought to be diſturbed in his Life or Property; *i. e.* puniſhed. This is nothing but the Application of that univerſal Rule of Reaſon, and of the Goſpel, *As ye*

would that Men ſhould do to you, do ye alſo to them likewiſe. If therefore *Deiſts, Arians*, &c. are to be excluded all Favour from a Government, merely becauſe they are denominated *Deiſts*, &c. it muſt be proved, that *Deiſm, Arianiſm*, &c. ſome how or other, affects the Civil Intereſts of Men; or incapacitates them from ſerving the Public, by making them unable or unwilling to ſave the Life, Liberty, or Property of Subjects, or to pay a Lawful Obedience to Sovereigns. Now to me it ſeems very evident, that the holding ſuch Principles as *Deiſts, Arians*, &c. as ſuch, hold in Matters of Religion, are not at all inconſiſtent with the Lives, Liberties, or Poſſeſſions of their Neighbours: They do not tend to hurt any Men in their natural Rights, which 'tis the Duty of the Magiſtrate ever to defend and guard, and not to deprive them of: And as their Principles or Tenets are no ways prejudicial to Society, if they ſhew themſelves *Friends* to any Government, they have a certain Right to Protection, and to ſuch Favour as may make them moſt ſerviceable to Others, and moſt eaſy in the Enjoyment of Themſelves.

Before I conclude, let me add this one Remark, that 'tis a *Benefit* to the *Public*

not

not to be deprived of the Teſtimony of any conſiderable Number of Men. You your ſelves have frequent Occaſions for the Evidences of our Friends; and very often in the Courſe of Things, Juſtice muſt be delay'd, or Injuſtice actually done, if the proper Perſons are incapacitated from bearing their Teſtimony. If then, on Account of Conſcience, our Friends are diſabled from giving their Evidence, it *muſt* happen, as it in Fact *has* often happen'd, that the State it ſelf muſt be a Sufferer; and perhaps You of the Miniſtry may be affected in particular Circumſtances in your own private Properties.

Ye ſee now an impartial Examination of your Petition, and of the Beſt Arguments that can be brought in its Support. The Legiſlature of this great, rich, flouriſhing and wiſe Nation have been led, upon theſe and ſuch like Motives, to grant us the Indulgence we wanted. We ſhall ever thankfully acknowledge the Favour, and endeavour to ſhew our ſelves not ungrateful to the Government, by our Sobriety, and Good Behaviour; by our Obedience and Love to the King; and by our Peaceable Conduct amongſt our Neighbours.

Farewel.

THE

Copy of a Printed Paper,

ENTITLED,

I. The PETITION of the LONDON CLERGY to the Houſe of LORDS, againſt the *Quakers* Bill.

II. The LORDS PROTEST on rejecting the ſaid PETITION.

III. The LORDS PROTEST againſt the *Quakers* Bill.

THE

Copy of a Printed Paper,

ENTITLED,

I. The PETITION of the LORDS
Chief to the House of LORDS,
against the Quakers Bill.

II. The LORDS Protest on read-
ing the said PETITION.

III. The LORDS Protest against
the Quakers Bill.

I. *The Petition of the* London-Clergy, *againſt the* Quakers *Bill.*

To the Right Honourable the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament aſſembled,

The Humble Petition of the Clergy in and about London, *with all Submiſſion,*

SHEWETH,

THAT there is a Bill now depending in your Lordſhips Houſe, entitled, *An Act for granting the People called* Quakers, *ſuch Forms of Affirmation or Declaration, as may remove the Difficulties which many of them lie under.* Which Bill, ſhould it paſs into a Law, as it may, in its Conſequences, nearly affect the Property of the Subject in general, ſo will it in a more eſpecial Manner endanger the legal Maintenance of the Clergy by Tythes: Inaſmuch as the People called *Quakers* pretend to deny the Payment of Tythes, upon a Principle of Conſcience; and therefore, as your Petitioners apprehend, may be under ſtrong Inducements to eaſe their Conſcience in that Reſpect, by violating it in another, when their ſimple Affirmation,

on, in behalf of Friends of the ſame Perſuaſion, ſhall paſs in all Courts of Juſtice for legal Evidence.

However the Injuries, that your Petitioners, in their private Rights, may poſſibly ſuffer, are, as they ought to be, of ſmall Account with them, in Compariſon of the Miſchiefs which may redound to Society from the Indulgence intended; as it ſeems to imply, that Juſtice may be duly adminiſtred, and Government ſupported, without the Intervention of any ſolemn Appeal to *God, as Witneſs of the Truth of what is ſaid*, by all Perſons in Caſes of great Importance to the common Welfare: Whereas your Petitioners are firmly perſuaded, that an Oath was inſtituted by God himſelf, as the ſureſt Bond of Fidelity among Men, and hath been eſteemed and found ſo to be, by the Wiſdom and Experience of all Nations, in all Ages.

But that which chiefly moves your Petitioners to apply to your Lordſhips, is, their ſerious Concern leſt the Minds of good Men ſhould be grieved and wounded, and the Enemies of Chriſtianity triumph, if they ſhall ſee ſuch Condeſcenſions made, by a Chriſtian Legiſlature, to a Sect of Men, who renounce the Divine Inſtitutions of Chriſt,

par-

particularly that, by which the Faithful are initiated into this Religion, and denominated Chriſtians; and who cannot on this Account, according to the uniform Judgment and Practice of the Catholick Church, be deem'd worthy of that ſacred Name.

Your Petitioners do moreover crave Leave to repreſent to your Lordſhips, that, upon the beſt Information they can gain, the Inſtances wherein any *Quaker* hath refuſed the Solemn Affirmation preſcribed by an Act in the Seventh and Eighth of *William* III. have, from the paſſing that Act to this Day, been exceeding rare; ſo that there might be Ground to hope, that the continued Uſe of the ſaid Solemn Affirmation would, by Degrees, have cured that People of all thoſe unreaſonable Prejudices againſt an Oath, which the Favour deſign'd them by their Bill may tend to ſtrengthen and confirm.

And your Petitioners humbly leave it to your Lordſhips wiſe Deliberation, whether ſuch an extraordinary Indulgence, granted to a People already (as is conceived) too numerous, may not contribute to multiply their Sect, and tempt Perſons to profeſs themſelves *Quakers*, in order to be exempted from the Obli-

gation of Oaths, and to ſtand upon a Foot of Privilege, not allowed to the beſt Chriſtians and Subjects in the Kingdom.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly hope, that theſe, and other Conſiderations, which may offer themſelves to your Lordſhips great Wiſdom, may induce your Lordſhips, not to give your Conſent to the paſſing of this Bill into a Law.

And your Petitioners ſhall ever pray, &c.

II. *The Lords* PROTEST *on rejecting the ſaid Petition.*

Die Mercurii 17° *die Januarii* 1721.

A Petition of the Clergy in and about *London* was preſented to the Houſe, and read, againſt the paſſing the Bill, entitl'd, *An Act for granting the People called* Quakers *ſuch Forms of Affirmation or Declaration, as may remove the Difficulties which many of them lie under.*

And a Motion being made, that the ſaid Petition be rejected. After Debate,

The Queſtion was put, whether the ſaid Petition ſhall be rejected?

It was reſolved in the Affirmative.

Diſſentient.

I. BECAUSE the Right of Petitioning, in a legal Manner, to legal Purpoſes, does, we apprehend, appertain by

Law and Uſage, to the free People of this Realm; and is as eſſential to the Subject, acting within his due Bounds, as the Liberty of Debate is to the Conſtitution of Parliament. And this Right, as it extends to the Petitioning even for the Repeal of Acts now in force, by which the People think themſelves aggrieved; ſo it juſtifies them yet more in repreſenting their humble Senſe of any new Law, while it is under the Conſideration of Parliament. Nor are the Clergy, we preſume, leſs privileged, in Relation to the Exerciſe of this Right, than any other of his Majeſty's Subjects. On the contrary, we believe them as worthy of enjoying it, and as capable of exerting it to wiſe and good Ends, as any Rank of private Men in the Kingdom.

II. Becauſe the Petition rejected is, in our Opinion, proper and inoffenſive, both as to the Matter and Manner of it, ſince it partly relates to the peculiar Rights of the Clergy in Point of Tythes, and partly expreſſes their Fears, (as we conceive, not altogether groundleſs) leſt the Sect of *Quakers*, already too numerous, ſhould by this new Indulgence, be greatly multiply'd; and leaſt the Honour of Religion ſhould any ways ſuffer, and the Foundations of Government

be ſhaken by what is intended; both which it is the particular Duty of their Function to uphold and ſecure. We are not therefore apprehenſive that it misbecame their Characters to interpoſe on any of theſe important Points: And the Way in which they have done it, muſt ſeem to us free from Exception, till ſome Paſſage in their Petition is pitch'd upon, as obnoxious, and cenſured by the Houſe, which as yet hath not been done.

III. Becauſe the Petition ſuggeſts a particular Grievance under which the Clergy will ſuffer by this Act, more than any other Order of Men; which, as it had never been obſerved in the Debates on the Bill, ſo was allowed to deſerve the Conſideration of the Houſe. And therefore, had there been any other Part of their Petition leſs unexceptionable, (as we apprehend there is not) yet we do not think, that it was reaſonable to lay aſide the whole on that Account, and reject what was acknowledg'd fit to be conſidered, for the Sake of what was thought improper to be offered.

IV. Becauſe the Clergy of *London* are not in general ſo liberally provided for, but that they have Reaſon to be watchful in Relation to any Step that may unwarily be taken towards diminiſhing

their

their Maintenance; which we look upon, as not duly proportioned to their Labours in populous Pariſhes, and to the various Employments given them by Infidels, and Hereticks, Papiſts, and divers Sects of Men diſſenting from the Church eſtabliſhed by Law, with which this Metropolis is known to abound. And as their Situation gives them near Opportunities of obſerving and knowing what may be ſtirred in Parliament, to the Prejudice of their Order; ſo we cannot but think that it becomes them to make uſe of that Advantage in behalf of their diſtant Brethren, as often as need ſhall require; eſpecially at a Time when the Repreſentatives of the Clergy are not attending in Convocation, and in a Readineſs to exert their known Right of applying to the Legiſlature on all ſuch Occaſions.

V. Becauſe the *London* Clergy, from whence the Petition came, are, in our Opinion, and have been always eſteem'd of great Conſideration, with Reſpect to their extenſive Influence, and their Ability to be ſerviceable to the State in important Conjunctures. From this Body of Men have proceeded many of the moſt eminent Lights of the Church, and Ornaments of the Biſhops Bench, eſpecially

cially ſince the Revolution; and, in the Reign preceding it, their never-to-be forgotten Labours put a Stop to the Torrent of Popery, then ready to overflow us. On which, and many other Accounts, we cannot but wiſh that the Applications at any time made to this Houſe by the City-Clergy might be received with Regard and Tenderneſs; and a more than ordinary Indulgence allowed them, at a Time when ſo great Favours are about to be beſtowed on the profeſſed Opugners of their Function and Maintenance.

VI. Becauſe by Experience we find, that the treating in this Manner a Petition from any great and conſiderable Body of Men, is not the beſt way to allay the Jealouſies, and extinguiſh the Uneaſineſs that occaſioned it; a very contrary Effect having followed (according to the beſt of our Obſervation) from the rejecting a Petition lately offered by the City of *London*. And the oftner ſuch Inſtances are repeated, the more, we fear, the Diſaffection of the People will increaſe; who, thinking themſelves under Hardſhips from which they deſire to be relieved, may look upon it as a new, and yet greater Hardſhip, not to be heard. And tho' the modeſt and dutiful Demeanor of the Clergy ſhould no ways contribute to theſe

Conſequences,

Conſequences, yet we know not how far this may be the Caſe, with reſpect to their Flocks; to whom their Perſons and Characters are dear, and who may therefore be induced by the Reverence they bear to their Paſtors, to expreſs as much Concern on their Account, as they would on their own. For which Reaſon it was our earneſt Deſire, this ſecond, and in our Opinion, dangerous Experiment, might not have been made.

W. Ebor.
Weſton,
Uxbridge,
Scarſdale,
Compton,
Briſtol,
Conningsby,
Strafford,
Foley,
North and *Grey,*
Gower,
Trevor,
Bingley,
St. John de Bletſoe,
Guilford,
Cowper,
Aberdeen,
Bathurſt,
Montjoy,
Fr. Roffen.

The

The LORDS *Proteſt againſt the* Quakers *Bill.*

Die Veneris 19° *Januarij*, 1721.

Hodie 3ª vice lecta eſt Billa, Entituled, *An Act for Granting the People called* Quakers, *ſuch Forms of Affirmation, and Declaration, as may remove the Difficulties which many of them lie under.*

The Queſtion was put, Whether this Bill ſhall Paſs?

It was reſolved in the Affirmative.

Diſſentient.
W. Cant. Jo. Oxon.

I. BEcauſe the Privileges allowed by this Bill to the Quakers are without Example, and no ways proportioned to the Steps formerly taken towards a gradual Indulgence of them; for, whereas they have been hitherto under the real Obligation of an Oath, tho' diſpenſed with as to ſome Formalities with reſpect to the Manner of wording, and taking it, they are now altogether releaſed, both from the Form and Subſtance of an Oath; and

and admitted to profeſs Fidelity, and give Teſtimony upon their ſimple Affirmation: Nor are theſe great Privileges Indulged to them (as the Leſs were) from Time to Time, and by Degrees, but are at once made perpetual.

II. Becauſe we look upon the *Quakers*, who reject the two Sacraments of Chriſt, and are, as far as they ſo do, unworthy of the Name of Chriſtians, to be on that account, unworthy alſo of receiving ſuch diſtinguiſhing Marks of Favour.

III. Becauſe the *Quakers*, as they renounce the Inſtitutions of Chriſt, ſo have not given even the Evidence by Law required, of their Belief of his Divinity: It no ways appearing to us (nor, do we believe it can be made appear,) that ever ſince they were firſt Indulged [1. *W.* & *M.*] one *Quaker* in an hundred hath Subſcribed *the Profeſſion of Chriſtian Belief* directed by that Act; nor could we, upon a Motion made in the Houſe, prevail, that they ſhould even now be Obliged by ſuch previous Subſcription, to Intitle themſelves to the new and extraordinary Favours deſigned them. The Conſequence of which muſt, in our Opinion, be, that they will encourage themſelves yet farther in their Averſion to ſubſcribe that Profeſſion of Chriſtian Belief, which they

ſeem more to decline than even the taking of an Oath; ſince great Numbers of them have Sworn, tho' very few have Subſcribed that Profeſſion. Nor are we without Apprehenſions, that it may reflect ſome Diſhonour on the Chriſtian Faith, if the Evidence given by ſuch Perſons on their bare Word, ſhall by Law be judged of equal Credit with the ſolemn Oath of an acknowledged Chriſtian, and Sincere Member of the Eſtabliſhed Communion.

IV. Becauſe we look upon it as highly unreaſonable, that, in a Kingdom, where the Nobles, the Clergy and Commons are obliged to Swear Fealty to the Crown, and even the Sovereign himſelf takes an Oath at his Coronation; a particular Sect of Men, who refuſe to ſerve the State, either as Civil Officers, or Soldiers, ſhould be entirely releaſed from that Obligation: Since 'tis natural to expect, that Perſons thus Indulged as to the Manner of Profeſſing, and the Meaſure of Performing their Allegiance, ſhould, by Degrees, be Induced totally to withdraw it, till they become as bad Subjects as Chriſtians.

V. Becauſe tho' ſuch extraordinary Privileges are allowed to the Sect of *Quakers* by this Bill, yet there is no Mark or

Teſt

Teſt preſcribed by it, or by any other Act, by which it may certainly be known who are *Quakers*; and conſequently, who are, or are not Intitled to thoſe Privileges; from whence this Inconvenience may ariſe, that many, not really *Quakers*, may yet ſhelter themſelves under the Cover of that Name, on purpoſe to be Releaſed from the Obligations of Oaths: It not being, we conceive, in the Power of the Magiſtrate, as this Bill ſtands, to oblige any Perſon to take an Oath, who, at the time of tendering it, ſhall profeſs himſelf a *Quaker*: So that the Conceſſions now made to that Sect, may prove a great Inlet to Hypocriſy and Falſehood, and will naturally tend towards increaſing their Numbers; which, we rather wiſh, may be every Day diminiſhed.

VI. Becauſe we do not apprehend that the *Quakers*, as a Sect, are really under ſuch Scruples in Point of an Oath, that it is neceſſary to eaſe them by ſuch an Act; few of them having, for five and twenty Years paſt, ſince their ſolemn Affirmation (equivalent to an Oath) was enacted, ever refuſed to comply with it: And, ſhould this have now and then happen'd, yet, when the great Body of this ſort of Sectaries are at Eaſe in their Conſciences, the Scruples of a few, we think, ought

not to be regarded; eſpecially, if continuing the Law now in Force will probably extinguiſh thoſe Scruples, and the Repeal of it will certainly give new Life and Strength to them.

VII. Becauſe the Security of the Subject's Property, which depends upon Teſtimony, ſeems to us to be leſſened by this Act; the Reverenee of an Oath having been always obſerved to operate farther towards the Diſcovery of Truth, than any other leſs ſolemn Form of Aſſeveration. Nor can the *Quakers* be excepted in this Caſe, whoſe awful Apprehenſions of an Oath appear from their earneſt Endeavours to decline it. And therefore, where the Payment of Tythes, by them held to be ſinful, is concerned, they will have ſtrong Inducements to diſguiſe the Truth, in what they ſimply affirm, rather than wound their Conſciences and Credit, by contributing towards the Support of ſuch an Antichriſtian Payment. In other Caſes of Property, their Intereſt only will claſh with their Veracity; but the Double Motive of Intereſt and Conſcience, will influence them with reſpect to the Clergy, whoſe Calling and Maintenance, they equally condemn.

VIII. Becauſe the Inducement, mentioned in the Bill, towards granting the

Quakers

Quakers theſe Favours, That they are well Affected to the Government (a Poſition, of which we have ſome doubt) might, we apprehend, be improved into a Reaſon for granting like Favours to *Deiſts*, *Arians*, *Jews*, and even *Heathens* themſelves; all of which may poſſibly be, as ſome of them certainly are, Friends to the Government. However their Friendſhip, We preſume, would be cultivated at too great an Expence, if, for the ſake of it, any thing ſhould be done by the Legiſlature, which might weaken the Security of all Governments, an Oath; and, by that Means do more Miſchief to the State, in one reſpect, than it brought Advantage in another. And we the rather thus chooſe to reaſon, becauſe an Argument was urged in the Debate, and no ways diſallowed, that, if *Heathens* themſelves were equally of Uſe to the State, as the *Quakers* are, they ought alſo equally by Law to be Indulged: Whereas our firm Perſwaſion is, that, as no Man ſhould be perſecuted for his Opinions in Religion; ſo neither ſhould any Man, who is known to avow Principles deſtructive of Chriſtianity, however uſeful he may otherwiſe be to the State, be encouraged by a Law purpoſely

posely made in his Favour to continue in those Principles.

W. Ebor.
Fr. Roffen.
Gower,
Montjoy,
Strafford,
F. Ceſtriens,
St. John de Bletſoe,
Salisbury,
Aberdeen,
Trevor,
Compton.

POST-

POSTSCRIPT.

ON *Munday* laſt, being the 5th Inſtant, the Noble Lords were made ſo ſenſible of the Falſhood of that Aſſertion in the Proteſt, That your "Convocation "has a known Right of applying to the "Legiſlature on all ſuch Occaſions" as the preſent, that they order'd the Proteſt, in which ſo notorious an Untruth was contain'd, to be eraſed. That Man, who was openly charg'd with drawing up the Petition, and ſending it from *Weſtminſter* to *London*; and who undertook to produce *ſeveral Inſtances* of ſuch Applications to Parliament, was not able to produce ſo much as *One* Inſtance to the Purpoſe: Nay, what he did produce, were (if I am inform'd right) directly *contrary* to the End for which he mentioned them. It behoveth you and your Party, if you can, to make good your Friends Aſſertions in your Behalf.

ERRAT. P. 18. l. ult. after *in*, add, *and about*,

FINIS.

POSTSCRIPT.